Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 15-28 without prejudice. Please add new claims 29-43 as indicated below in the List of Claims.

List of Claims

1-28. Cancelled.

29. (New) A process for producing a branched chain L-amino acid, comprising:

a) amplifying the activity of brnE (SEQ ID NO:5) or brnF (SEQ ID NO:3) in a bacterium;

b) cultivating the bacterium of step a) in a culture medium under conditions effective for the production of said branched chain L-amino acid; and

c) isolating said branched chain L-amino acid from the cultivated bacterium or culture medium of step b).

30. (New) The process of claim ~~29~~, wherein said bacterium is of the genus Corynebacterium.

31. (New) The process of claim ~~30~~, wherein said bacterium is of the species *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

32. (New) The process of any one of claims ~~29-31~~, wherein said branched chain L-amino acid is selected from the group consisting of: L-leucine; L-isoleucine; and L-valine.

33. (New) A process for producing a branched chain L-amino acid, comprising:

a) transforming a bacterial host cell with a recombinant vector comprising a nucleic acid insert encoding a protein consisting essentially of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:3; the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5; or both;

b) cultivating the transformed bacterial host cell of step a) in a culture medium under conditions effective for the production of said branched chain L-amino acid; and

c) isolating said branched chain L-amino acid from the cultivated bacterial host cell or culture medium of step b).

6 34. (New) The process of claim 33, wherein said nucleic acid insert consists essentially of a nucleic acid sequence selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NO:1; nucleotides 101-1176 of SEQ ID NO:1; SEQ ID NO:2; and SEQ ID NO:4.

7 35. (New) The process of claim 33, wherein said nucleic acid insert consists of a nucleic acid sequence selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NO:1; nucleotides 101-1176 of SEQ ID NO:1; SEQ ID NO:2; and SEQ ID NO:4.

8 36. (New) The process of claim 33, wherein said nucleic acid insert consists essentially of nucleotides 101-853 of SEQ ID NO:6 or nucleotides 853-1176 of SEQ ID NO:6.

9 37. (New) The process of claim 36, wherein said nucleic acid insert consists of nucleotides 101-853 of SEQ ID NO:6 or nucleotides 853-1176 of SEQ ID NO:6.

10 38. (New) The process of claim 33, wherein said nucleic acid insert comprises:

a) nucleotides encoding a first polypeptide, said first polypeptide consisting essentially of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:3; and

b) nucleotides encoding a second distinct polypeptide, said second distinct polypeptide consisting essentially of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

11 39. (New) The process of claim 33, wherein said nucleic acid insert consists essentially of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:4.

40. (New) The process of claim 39, wherein said nucleic acid insert consists of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:4.

41. (New) The process of any one of claims 33-40, wherein said bacterium is of the genus Corynebacterium.

42. (New) The process of claim 41, wherein said bacterium is of the species *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

43. (New) The process of any one of claims 33-40, wherein said branched chain L-amino acid is selected from the group consisting of: L-leucine; L-isoleucine; and L-valine.